1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

323 the neighborhood of the hut, where it is left to burn slowly, until all the wood and coals have been consumed. Neither paint, glaze, nor plastic ornamentation is applied nowadays.

323 172 531 ANCIENT POTTERY VESSELS.—The pottery objects found in many parts of the Mosquito Coast, chiefly in old burial grounds, indicate a much greater skill in this art than that possessed by the present-day inhabitants of the country. Most of such ware is unpainted, but fine plastic ornamentation was applied to the knob handles and occasionally to the legs also. The designs represent chiefly heads of jaguars, alligators, turtles, and birds. Fragments of tripod vessels with legs modified into animal legs may also be found; sometimes these legs are hollow and contain clay balls as rattlers. In the shell mounds or kitchen middens near the sea fragments of pottery vessels with figurine handles have been discovered. A geometric motive, which is often found on old pottery vessels and on stonework, is the incised guilloche or rope pattern, which may have a curvilinear or an angular construction.

172 532 ANCIENT CLAY MASKS.—From the interior of the Mosquito Coast, probably the Sumu territory, the discovery of human heads, busts or entire figures, made of clay, has been reported. The material used for this purpose is said to have been mixed occasionally with gold dust. These objects are supposed to be the likenesses of chiefs or other prominent persons who had been buried at the spots where these finds were made. A number of these "masks" were brought to England from the interior of the Mosquito Coast about the year 1775, and eight of them have been described and depicted by Rogers (107). As these masks have their backs concaved in a cylindrical form, they were probably parts of sepulchral urns.

COTTON TEXTILES

248 CULTIVATION OF COTTON.—The art of weaving has not been mastered by the young generation, but cotton (*Gossypium* sp.; M.: *wahmuk;* S.: *wahmak*) is still cultivated in a desultory way. The bushes, which attain a height of from 8 to 12 feet, may be found in the neighborhood of almost every hut; they flower the whole year round, and at any time buds and open bolls may be found on the same plant.

286 462 A FEMALE OCCUPATION.—Dyeing and spinning cotton and weaving it into cloth is exclusively woman's work. Exquemelin (Fr. edit.: II, 269), who wrote during the second half of the seventeenth century, states that the women only spin the cotton and that the men do the weaving.

286 TYPES OF FABRICS.—The elder Sumu women still weave cotton into loin cloths (M.: *palpura;* T. and P.: *dŏk;* U.: *ani*), girdles or

a b

a, Net carrying bag made from the fiber of the pita or silk grass plant. Sumu of Rio Patuca; b, saddlebag made by the hispanized Sumu of upper Rio Grande

[p. 50 A]

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
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1: Conzemius M-4,5 (1921) 1932
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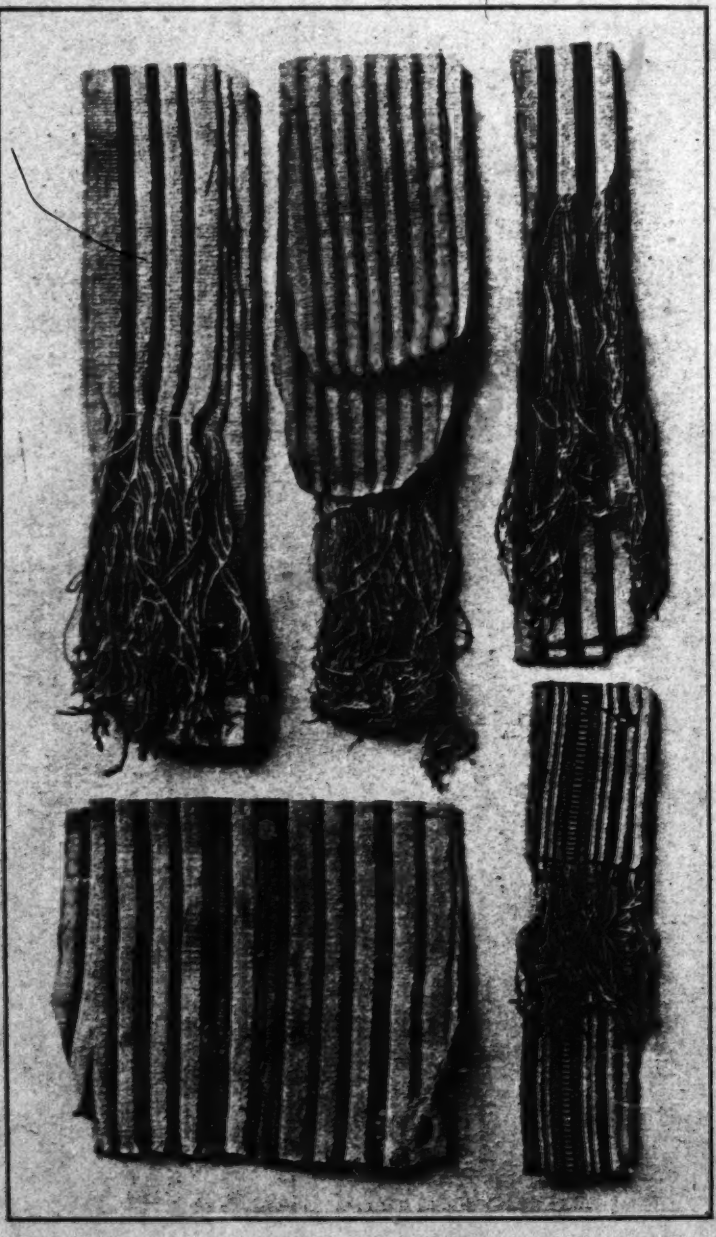

FOUR COTTON GIRDLES AND A PIECE OF COTTON CLOTH TO BE USED IN MAKING A HUNTER'S BAG

Sumu of Rio Bocay and Rio Waspuk.

[p. 50 B]

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[p. 50 b]

HAMMOCK MADE FROM THE BAST FIBER OF THE SANI TREE
Miskito of Rio Platano.

I: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

sashes (M.: *yalasawa;* S.: *bamaksitna*), hammocks (M.: *silmika;* S.: *wak*), and into shot bags or hunter's bags (M. and S.: *malipuk*). The long sleeveless garment, called *sipal* by the Miskito and *kiškura* by the Sumu, is not made any longer. All these cotton textiles, although coarse in texture, are soft to the touch. They are of excellent quality and the patterns are always inwoven. Sometimes a fringe of the white down of the muscovy duck extends all round the selvage. According to Exquemelin (Engl. edit.: 251) bed sheets were also made of cotton in former days by the Miskito.

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Spindle.—The spindle (M.: *blakat;* S.: *malkat, malakat*)[17] consists of a shank made from the hard wood of the pejivalle palm. It measures from 1 to 1½ feet in length and tapers to a point on both ends. The whorl or fly is inserted at about 2 inches from the lower extremity, and the whole presents the appearance of a gigantic top. The whorl is usually made of a rare, very hard and heavy marblelike rock, which occurs in different colors and is called *kupa* by the Indians. Turtle or tortoise shell, manatee bone, clay seeds, and even heavy wood are also employed occasionally for this purpose. The shape of the whorl varies considerably; most commonly it is of conical form. The largest diameter varies from 1 to 1½ inches, and the height from three-quarters of an inch to 1 inch.

283

Spinning.—A very curious method is used to spin (M.: *blakaya, bitikaya;* T. and P.: *wšinin, wšinini;* U.: *tšihnaka*). A cotton thread, drawn by the left hand of the operator from a pile which she is holding in her lap, is attached to the spindle a little above the whorl. The spindle is placed in a calabash and is made to revolve very rapidly by means of the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. With each twirling movement the spindle is kept in rotation for about half a minute by the momentum of the whorl, during which time the operator is continually drawing out cotton thread, which is then wound on the spindle. This process is repeated until the spindle is full.

Weaving.—The cotton thread is woven (M.: *lukaya;* T.: *kilnin;* P.: *anini;* U.: *dalnaka*) on a horizontal loom (M.: *slabin;* S.: *slabin, silamka*) of most simple construction and similar to the one shown on the Mexican Codices, and still used by the Maya and other Central American tribes. It consists of a cloth beam and a yarn beam, which are connected to each other by the warp. The yarn beam is attached to a house post, about 6 feet from the ground, while the cloth beam is attached round the back of the weaver by a thick cord, enabling her to tighten the warp at will by merely leaning backward. The completed material is rolled up at the lower end. Looms of similar technique are also found in South America and Oceania.

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[17] Cf. Mexican *malacatl*.

2: Kirchhoff E-4 (no date) 1948
SA15 Mosquito SA15

wore tight cotton bands below the knees and above the ankles. Today woven bands of glass beads are worn around the neck, wrists, and ankles. Straw hats are decorated with feathers and jaguar teeth (*Mosquito, Paya*). 301

Black paint is smeared over the body by the men (*Sumo, Mosquito, Paya*) as a decoration and for protection from insects. Geometrical designs are drawn in red paint, mainly by the women. The *Sumo, Mosquito,* and *Paya* tattooed geometrical designs upon the face, arms, and breast. The *Sumo* men made ornamental scars on their faces and chipped their teeth. All *Sumo* tribes except the *Bawihka* practiced head deformation. During infancy a folding flap of wood at the top of the cradle was tied firmly to the crown of the head. 302 [751] [53] 304

TRANSPORTATION

Loads are carried with a band passing over the head (women) or across the chest (men). Children are carried on the back in a blanket, the points of which are tied in front. 482 [855] [487]

The country has hunting trails but no roads. Most travel is done in dugout canoes propelled with poles and broad-bladed paddles. Rafts are used for down-river traffic. Large keeled canoes, often equipped with a sail, are used at sea. 501

MANUFACTURES

Basketry.—Crude baskets, mainly of wickerwork, are made chiefly for storage bins. Bark and silk grass fiber bags are very common. Bark fiber is used also to make tumplines, hammocks, and such. 285

Bark cloth.—Bark cloth is beaten out of ficus-tree bark with a grooved wooden mallet. 287

Weaving.—Cotton is spun on a spindle, which has a whorl and is rotated in a gourd. Coarse-textured but soft cotton cloth is woven on a two-beam loom. Thread was formerly dyed and designs were woven in the cloth. Sometimes feathers, particularly a fringe of white Muscovy duck down, were incorporated into the fabric. 286

Ceramics.—Pottery making has been described only from the *Sumo* and *Paya*, although pottery was formerly made by all tribes. Women model small vessels out of a lump of clay but build up large ones with coils. They polish them with a pebble, dry them for several days, and fire them in the open. Pottery types include jars about 4 feet (1.3 m.) high, various types of jugs, water jars, small bowls, griddles, and tobacco pipes. All vessels have a convex base. 323

Miscellaneous manufactures.—Metates are still used by the *Paya* and *Sumo*, and they have recently been adopted by the *Jicaque*, but the *Mosquito* are said no longer to use them. Metates are flat-topped boulders, which only rarely have a trimmed surface. Manos are round pebbles. 415